

ASHA's Response to Comments on FY18 Request for Application

ASHA's Draft FY18 RFA was released for comment on October 23, 2017. We received a great deal of constructive input from the community and have made a number of revisions to that draft RFA. They are highlighted below.

Timing of the announcement of FY17 awards

It appears that there will be additional delays in announcing ASHA's FY17 awards due to a number of additional requirements and approvals relative to the use of FY17 funds. We realize that this makes it difficult to plan carefully for your program's FY18 request. Recognizing this, we suggest that you briefly note any assumptions that you are making relative to your FY18 request.

Cost Share Requirements

Given the structure of ASHA grants, we recognize that each of our partners, both USO and OSI, makes very significant investments, both financial and in-kind, in the projects for which you seek ASHA funds. By definition, you contribute extensive 'cost-share' type resources. We have eliminated the requirement that you propose specific cost-share as part of the grant application. You can, of course, refer to your contributions and investments in your narrative. But they should not be listed as part of the proposed budget, nor is there a requirement to report on them in quarterly and annual financial reports.

Cost allowability

Information on allowable costs can be found in 2 CFR 200, Sub-part E. Construction management costs directly related to the project are considered allowable costs for ASHA grants. Public diplomacy costs, other than reasonable branding and marking expenses, are not allowed under ASHA agreements. For SF 424 C, Box 17, use 100% for the Federal percentage share.

Public Diplomacy Goals and Objectives

The RFA identifies a number of Public Diplomacy goals and objectives. Each applicant may not be able to address all of these, however successful applications will make a compelling case for the majority of them.

Use of Metric system

Per USG requirements, we have indicated that all measurements for construction documents must be in metric units.

Training and research for hospitals

We have removed the requirement that hospitals engage in training and/or research as a requirement for eligibility. This does not diminish the importance of these activities as potential vehicles for public diplomacy impact.

USAID Mission Country Development Cooperation Strategies and Embassy Public Diplomacy Strategies

Both the Mission CDCS and the Embassy public diplomacy goals may provide useful input to your public diplomacy approach. We advise you to contact the USAID Mission or Embassy during the application process to ensure that they are aware of the work of your organization. If your application is selected for funding, Mission concurrence will be required to precede with an award.

Tax Exemption for USAID Funds

USAID's appropriations act (e.g., section 7013 of the 2017 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act) prohibits obligating funds through a bilateral agreement that are not exempt from foreign taxes. How this is handled depends in the country, and all specific tax questions related to USAID should be directed to the Agreement Officer.

Completeness Review

In past years, ASHA has conducted completeness reviews for proposals submitted before the submission deadline. This year, given the simplicity of the concept paper format, we will not conduct a completeness review.

Type of entity of USOs

Any organization can apply as a USO, including for-profit corporations and Research Universities, as long as they meet all the eligibility criteria in the RFA. They must also be able to demonstrate that they comply with the intent of the ASHA legislation. ([Section 214 of the Foreign Assistance Act \(FAA\) of 1961,](#))

Content of the Concept Paper

We have increased the page limit for the concept paper to 7 pages. The "project description" in the Concept Paper may contain drawings, photographs, etc., but these will count toward the page limit. Applicants should follow the template in Annex 2. Additional attachments are not necessary.

Questions about the RFA

The period for public comment for the draft RFA has closed. Now that the RFA has been released in final, interested parties may submit additional questions up to 30 days before the close of the RFA via www.grants.gov. ASHA may post answers to frequently asked questions on www.grants.gov. ASHA will not provide guidance on specific applications while this announcement is open.